

FOOD WASTES AND GREASE



INFORMATION FOR RESTAURANTS &
FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

JULY 2009



REMEMBER!

Backups cost your business money, from repairs to equipment, inventory loss, plumbing bills, and restaurant closures.

Backups cause health risks. Sewer backups are unsanitary and contain bacteria that can be a threat to public health.

Backups damage our environment. Sewer backups can find their way into the stormwater drainage system and can contribute to the pollution of water bodies such as the Alewife Brook and Charles River.

Thousands of your tax dollars are spent every week cleaning sewer lines in an effort to prevent backups.



Improper disposal of food wastes is a violation of City Ordinances and can result in penalties and fines.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Cambridge Department of Public Works
147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge MA 02139
617-349-4800 / TTY 617-349-4806

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks>

Placing food wastes down the drain or garbage disposal is the leading cause of sewer line blockages and backups.

What are food wastes?

Food wastes include grease, oily liquids, salad dressings, coffee grounds, uneaten portions, and meat byproducts.

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) from food wastes can stick to plates or pots. Hot soapy water helps to loosen them, but when the water cools down in the sewer pipe the wastes become solid and stick to the insides of the pipe. This narrows the passageway until the pipe is blocked. Then sewer wastewater backs up into your basement or kitchen!



Grease-filled pipe

Did you know?

FOG includes meats, fish, poultry, pasta, margarine, salad dressing, coffee cream, cakes, desserts, and ice cream.

FOG gets into the sewer system through garbage disposals, floor drains, grease traps that are too small, sinks that bypass grease traps, grease traps that are installed incorrectly, and grease traps that are not maintained correctly.

Products designed to dissolve grease just send the grease further down the pipe.

What you can do

Here are some simple steps restaurant managers and employees can take to save money and protect our environment:

Separate food waste for compost collection or put food wastes in the trash, rather than down the drain. Avoid using garbage disposers.

Install properly sized grease traps or interceptors on kitchen sinks. Check and clean them regularly, before they are one-quarter filled with grease.



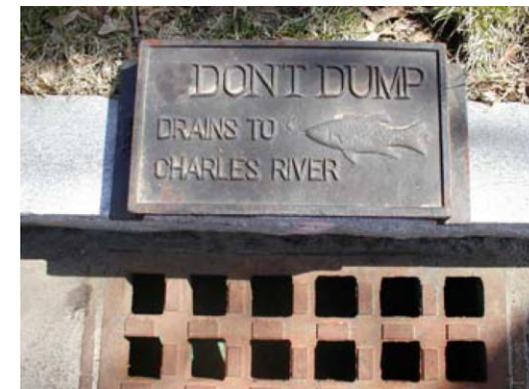
Store used oil containers away from catch basins and stormwater drains. Keep oil containers covered within a bermed area to contain any spills.



Train your employees about ways they can keep food wastes out of drains and catch basins. Cambridge DPW staff members are available to help you with your training needs.

Make sure your cleaning contractors, including duct cleaners, dispose of food wastes and rinse waters properly.

Protect catchbasins and stormwater drains. Never dump floor wash waters outside, or allow rinse waters from equipment cleaning to enter a catchbasin. Never rinse dumpsters where rinse water could flow to the street or into a catchbasin.



Cambridge catchbasins empty into the Alewife Brook and Charles river.

Contact your refuse collector to replace any leaking dumpsters. Leaking dumpsters can cause food wastes to enter catchbasins.

